

After line 2 please insert the following subtitle: -- Field of the Invention --;

After line 5, please insert the following subtitle: -- Background of the Invention --;

Line 13, delete "metre" and insert -- meter --;

After line 28 please insert the following subtitle: -- Summary of the Invention --.

1 Page 2, after line 3, please insert the following subtitle: -- Brief Description of the Presently Preferred Embodiments --.

Page 4, line 5, change "0,01" to -- 0.01 --.

Page 6, line 14 after "treated with" delete "Stockabsorb" and insert instead -- Stockabsorb®
(Stockabsorb® is a trademark of and a commercially available acrylamide/acrylic acid copolymer
of the instant assignee Stockhausen GmbH & Co. KG, 25 Bäckerpfad, 47805 Krefeld, Germany) --.

Page 7, after line 7, please insert the following subtitle: -- Brief Description of the Drawings --;

After line 11 add the following new paragraphs: -- Fig. 5 shows the lead content in the
cell wall; and

Fig. 6 shows the root stock of spruce grown in lead-contaminated soil treated and
untreated. --.

In the Claims:

Delete claims 1 and 12, amend claims 2-11 as follows:

2. (Amended) The process [Process] according to [Claim 1, characterized in that the substrates are] Claim 12, wherein the soil is treated by [means of] mixing the compound into the soil.

3. (Amended) The process [Process] according to Claim 2, [characterized in that in mixing,] wherein the compound is added in the amount of [additive is] 0.1 to 2.5% by weight.

4. (Amended) The process [Process] according to Claim 3, [characterized in that in mixing,] wherein the compound is added in the amount of [additive is] 0.5 to 2.0% by weight.

5. (Amended) The process [Process] according to [Claim 1, characterized in that] Claim 12, wherein the cross-linked poly(meth)acrylates are produced by using monoethylenically unsaturated monocarboxylic acids[, in particular acrylic acid or its salts].

6. (Amended) The process [Process] according to Claim [5] 12, [characterized in that] wherein the poly(meth)acrylates are produced by using [other] monoethylenically unsaturated monomers containing no carboxylate groups[, in particular by using acrylamide].

7. (Amended) The process [Process] according to [Claims 5 or 6, characterized in that] Claim 5, wherein the poly(meth)acrylates are obtained by using methylenbis(meth)acrylamide, ethylenbis(meth)acrylamide, N-methylolacrylamide or triallylamin as cross-linking agents[, whereby methylenbisacrylamide is preferred].

50362
A

8. (Amended) The process [Process] according to [one or more of Claims 5 to 7, characterized in that] Claim 5, wherein the poly(meth)acrylates are treated with a subsequent cross-linking agent in quantities of 0.01 to 10% by weight, at an increased temperature[, preferably between 80 and 250°C].

9. (Amended) The process [Process] according to [one or more of Claims 5 to 8, characterized in that] Claim 5, wherein the acidic monomer components of the poly(meth)acrylate are neutralized between 10 and 95 mol percent[, preferably between 50 and 90 mol percent].

10. (Amended) The process [Process] according to [one or more of Claims 5 to 9, characterized in that] Claim 5, wherein the poly(meth)acrylates have an absorption capacity for synthetic soil solution of more than 30 g/g[, preferably more than 50 g/g, and especially more than 65 g/g].

11. (Amended) The process [Process] according to [one or more of Claims 5 to 10, characterized in that] Claim 5, wherein the poly(meth)acrylates are worked into the acid soil up to a depth of about 50 cm.

Please add the following new claims:

13.
ent.
15 -- 12. (New) A process for reducing the presence of heavy metals in plants growing in soil contaminated with heavy metals, comprising: applying to the contaminated soil a heavy metal reducing effective amount of a compound selected from the group consisting of cross-linked polyacrylates and polymethyl^{sp}acrylates.

14
14 13. (New) The process according to claim 5, wherein the monocarboxylic acid is acrylic acid or its salts.

15
14 14. (New) The process according to claim 6, wherein the monoethylenically unsaturated monomer is acrylamide.

16
15 15. (New) The process according to claim 7, wherein the poly(meth)acrylates are obtained by using methylenebisacrylamide.

17
16 16. (New) The process according to claim 8, wherein the temperature is between 80°C and 250°C.

18
17 17. (New) The process according to claim 9, wherein the acidic monomer components are neutralized between 50 and 90 mol percent.

18. (New) The process according to claim 10, wherein the absorption capacity is more than 50 g/g.

19. (New) The process according to claim 10, wherein the absorption capacity is more than 65 g/g. --

In the Abstract:

Page 10, line 3, change "Abstract" to -- Abstract of the Disclosure --;

Line 5, change "is characterized in that" to , wherein --.